A True and strange RELATION

Of the Travels, Adventures, and great Persecutions of Four eminent

Quakers of Glocestershire

Who in the Year 1673. Travelled through *France*, *Italy* and *Turkey*, to promote their Religion.

WHEREIN

Is fully and faithfully declared the Designs, Endeavours and Attempts of these zealous Quakers, for the Conversion of the

Great TURK and the POPE.

With a perfect Account of the Event and Success of the business, and of all the most Remarkable passages. As also a faithful Relation of their private Discourses, and Disputes which passed between these *Quakers* and the *Pope*, the *Cardinal* his Cosin, and *Cardinal Pool*.

ALSO

Of their Voyage to Constantinople, and of their most Barbarous cruel and bloody Death, by the special command of the chief Governour the Great Turk.

Who caused their hands to be chopt off, their Tongues to be cut out, and their Eyes bored out, and each man to have a sharp wooden stake run in at his Fundament quite through his Body.

Faithfully and compendiously related by John Elias *Esquire, who was an Eye-witness to a great part of these Transactions in* Constantinople,

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With Allowance.

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IT was towards the end of *March* in the year 1673. that *John Watſon*, *William Stubbs*, *Nathaniel Golden*, and *Rowland Jenkins*, all of *Gloceſter-ſhire*, and eminetly know in that County to be *Leading-men* among the *Quakers*: It was I ſay, about that time that theſe men ſaid they had the *ſpirit of Burning* and the *Holy Anointing* in them, and were called and ſent by God to preach the *everlaſting Goſpel* to the *Nations* and *Heathens*. And they ſaid that the *child Jeſus* within them, had aſſured them of great ſucceſs, and that the Lord would be wonderfully with them in this *Diſpenſation*, that they ſhould break the *Bread of Life* to the Nations, and that the *Springs of Life* ſhould break forth out of their Bellies. It is a wonder to ſee what ſtrange effects and boldneſs theſe *Enthuſiaſtical perſwaſions* and *Phanatical Dreams* cauſed in theſe poor Men. They were now ſwelled with hopes and expectation of Wonders. They now reſolved to leave *England* & embark for *France*, and begin this *great work* of converting *Nations* and *Heathens*.

Reader, I do intend to give you a true and impartial account of theſe mens actions in Forreign parts, as I have received it from their own mouths, and alſo been fully and faithfully informed by ſeveral other Perſons of known worth and integrity, who were eye-witneſſes to the ſame.

John Watſon was a *Gentleman* of a pretty conſiderable Eſtate, and had been well educated, he had ſpent ſome years at the *Univerſity*, and had alſo formerly been a Traveller into *France*, *Spain* and *Italy*, all which Languages he throughly underſtood, and ſpake every fluently. The other three were plain Country-men, and knew no other Language but their own, but fully perſwaded themſelves they ſhould have the *Gift of Tongues*, and be indued with power from above.

It is not my intent to write a *Journal* of theſe mens actions, for that would ſwell this little Pamphlet into a huge book. I intend only to relate ſome of the moſt ſignal and moſt remarkable of their affairs and tranſactions, which I heard from their own mouths when I was in *Italy*, and which have been alſo related and atteſted by other perſons of known integrity.

In *Eaſter week* they took Shipping at *Dover*, and were ſoon waſted over to *Calis*. I find not that they had any Impulſe of Spirit to ſay or attempt any thing, but that they travelled on very peaceably and quietly, paying for what they had, and ſo came to the great City *Paris*, where they ſpent 2 days only and then advanced towards *Lyons*, where they continued above a Fortnight. Here it was that the tumultuous ſpirit began firſt to ſhew it ſelf tot he *French Nation*. On *April* 27. *William Stubbs* ſaid he had received a command from God to ſpeak; and he ſignified as much to *John Watſon* and the reſt. On the next day which was Sunday, about 10 of the Clock in the Forenoon they went all four to the great *Cathedral*, or St. *Johns Church*, where they were

celebrating *high Maß* (as they call it) about the middle of the *Maß*, *William Stubbs* on a ſudden climbs over the rails and goes up to the high Altar, where as he was beginning his diſcourſe in *Engliſh* (for as yet he had not received his *Gift of Tongues*) the *Church-Officers* preſently laid hands on him & carry him out, and commit him to Priſon until the next day. On *Munday* the Officers have him before the Magiſtrate, who refuſes to meddle in this caſe, but cauſes him forthwith to be ſent to the Arch-Biſhop. The Arch-Biſhop is highly offended with him for his bold attempt, and reſolves to puniſh him with all ſeverity imaginable, he remits him to Priſon, and orders that the next day at 10 of the Clock in the morning, he be brought before him again. On *Tueſday* he is ſtrictly examined what his intentions were, & how he durſt be ſo bold to commit ſo great a crime in ſo publick and confident a manner; His anſwers were altogether impertinent, and withal ſo impudent and ſawcy, that the Biſhop ſent him to the *Houſe of Correction* where he was ſoundly laſhed. On *Friday* morning the Biſhop ordered him to be brought before him again; and ſeemed to be much incenſed againſt this poor *Quaker*; Now the reaſon why his *Grace* was ſo fierce againſt this poor Man, was, becauſe ſome of his Servants had malitiouſly ſuggeſted to him that he was ſet on and encouraged to offer this publique affront to their Divine Service, by ſome of the *Hugonot Miniſters*: which was a moſt malitious untruth, for as yet theſe *Quakers* had not had any the leaſt correſpondence or converſe with any Proteſtant in *France*, as they did all very ſoberly atteſt to me in *Italy*. The Biſhop was reſolved to give him a full hearing, and to ſift the buſineſs to the bottom. He asked him if he was not ſet on to this irreverent action by the *Hugonot Miniſters*? He replyed no, he was moved by the Spirit of God within him and that it was the *Spirit of Burning* and the *Holy Anointing* that had cauſed him to do as he had done. And here he entred into a long diſcourſe, telling the *Arch-Biſhop*, and the *Canons* who were there preſent, that the Law of God was written upon Mens hearts, and that now the time was come that they ſhould all be taught of God: Now the Lords people were all to be Prophets, they were all to have freſh Springs ariſe in their hearts. And that the Lord had ſent him and three Friends more into theſe parts, to break the bread of Life to the Nations, to open the hidden Myſteries of Chriſts Kingdom, to overthrow the *Babyloniſh Practices* of *Rome*, to break the Serpents Head, and wound the great *Leviathan*.

The *Arch-Biſhop*, the *Canons*, and the whole Company were much aſtoniſhed at this Mans confidence, and his wild and Frantick diſcourſe and anſwers, and began now to relent, and to pitty this poor Man, and look upon him as a mad-man and one out of his ſenſes, and ſo accordingly gave order to have him to the Hoſpital of *mad people*, and there carefully to be looked after until he gave further order.

About a week after this, 3 *Engliſh Gentlemen* hearing what had paſſed, and how that an *Engliſhman* who was mad, was commited to the Hoſpital of *mad*

men. The Gentlemen went immediately to the Hoſpital to enquire the truth of the matter, when they came, the Keeper very courteouſly informed them of the whole buſineſs, brought them to the ſight of *Stubbs*; who was locked up in a ſmall Cell by himſelf alone, and an iron Chain about his Leg, and his head ſhaved, (for it is the cuſtome here to ſhave all mad people) When the Gentleman came in, they found him ſitting in a melancholly ſullen poſture: he would not ſo much as look up or ſpeak one word to them, for the ſpace of above an hour and half, notwithſtanding they ſpoke very kindly to him, and asked him concerning his condition, and the cauſes of his diſtemper, and promiſed him all the aſſiſtance and kindneſs that lay in their power: at laſt this ſullen Spirit was overcome, and he began to enter into a long diſcourſe of the Spirit within him, and that God had ſent him and his three Friend to break in pieces the great *Leviathan* of *Rome*. Now the Gentlemen quickly perceived his Spirit, and plainly diſcovered him to be no *mad-man* but a *Quaker*. They asked him concerning his other Friends where they were? And withal promiſed to do their utmoſt for his Releaſement, and ſo giving the Keeper ſome Money to be kind to their Country man they bid him farwel At evening they went to the Inn to viſit the other three *Quakers*, and had much diſcourſe with them, endeavouring to perſwade them to deſiſt from this ſo hazardous and fruitleſs an enterprize, and ſpeedily to return to their own Country, demonſtrating the great dangers and inconveniences they would thruſt themſelves upon, if they did ſtill perſiſt, or any farther proſecute this fond and rediculous undertaking; and ſo they parted. The next day they addreſſed to the Arch-Biſhop, who was pleaſed to entertain them with much civility and reſpect. They returned humble thanks to his *Grace* for his great care of their Countryman, in ſending him to ſuch a place where he was ſo well accommodated in all things in order to his cure, and withal repreſented to his Grace his condition, quality and Religion; and how that he was not a *mad-man* but one of thoſe *Sectarians* which in *England* are called *Quakers*. And withal informed the Arch-Biſhop and Canons how that party do deſire to appear different from all others in their manner of ſpeech, their apparel, and manners. And alſo humbly Petitioned his *Grace* for a releaſement, promiſing within a day or two to diſpatch them out of the Town; The Arch-Biſhop readily condeſcended to all their demands, and preſently gave order that *Stubbs* ſhould be ſet at Liberty, which was accordingly performed. And the day following they all four left the Town, and haſted their Journey to *Italy*.

When they came to *Milano* in *Italy*, they had another enthuſiaſtical impulſe of Spirit. And now *John Watſon*, *Nathaniel Golden* and *Rowland Jenkins*, who had hitherto been ſilent, or (as they expreſſed it themſelves) *humbly waiting at the Feet of Jeſus*, who had now given them command to begin to Preach the *Everlaſting Goſpel* to the *Italians*. Here *Stubbs* accompanied with his three friends did now (as formerly at *Lyons* in *France*) upon *Sunday*

enter the *Domo* or *Cathedral* of the City, and made a great and publick disturbance when they were in the height of their solemnities. *Watſon* began to make a diſcourſe in *Italian*, but was preſently ſeized and carried forth, and had before a Magiſtrate, who forthwith committed them all four to Priſon, but withal gave order they ſhould be civilly uſed & lack for nothing until further order; about four or five dayes after, they were commanded to appear before the *Governour* of *Milan* himſelf, who was reſolved to have a full account of the matter. The Governour when he ſaw their uncivil behaviour, their ſullen looks, and heard their wild diſcourſes, he preſently concluded them *mad-men*, and gave order to have them confined and carefully looked after, and alſo appointed two Phyſitians to viſit them and to do their utmoſt for their recovery. The Phyſitians preſently made a viſit to the Hoſpital and had a long diſcourſe with *Watſon*, (who ſpoke *Italian* well) and then returned to the Governour to give him their judgements of the buſineſs, they told his Excellence that they were mad, as did evidently appear to them by their very countenance and manner of diſcourſe: and that one of them (meaning *Stubbs*) had a manifeſt and ſignal token of his diſtemper, *viz.* his head was ſhaven according to the uſual Practiſe of all Phyſitians in the World, who alwayes uſe to ſhave mad-men thereby to cool the brain, and for the more commodious applying fomentitions and other proper Remedies for the Head, the ſeat and ſubject of the diſtemper. They added alſo that they did verily beleive they were *Dutch-men* who made an eſcape from their Keepers. The Governour was well ſatisfied with this account the Phyſitians gave of the *Quakers*, and accordingly ordered them to take care of them, and let no means be wanting that might be uſed for their recovery, and that they ſhould be uſed with all tenderneſs imaginable. The two Doctors return to the *Pazzi* or *mad-men*, and cauſe them to be ſhaved and purged, and the next day they bleed them all in the Arms and Feet, and every day twice a day cauſe their heads to be bathed with cold water, and their whole bodies alſo in a pond made for that uſe only: Here the poor *Quakers* went through a rigorous courſe of Phyſick; for in a month's time they were let blood about ſeventeen or eighteen ſeveral times, beſides frequent and violent purgings. *Golden* a fortnight after he had been thus confined, forbare eating, whether it was out of a ſullen dogged humor, or out of an Enthuſiaſme or expectation of *new Revelations*, I cannot certainly affirm; but by his wilful and contumacious abſtinence he gave up the Ghoſt and died after he had been a month thus ſhut up. The other three by bleeding & Purging were brought very low, the Phyſitians now were very much troubled & diſheartned, and did altogether deſpair of their recovery, and did ſignifie as much to the Governour, withal telling his Excellence that they ſuppoſed it was ſome *Religious melancholly* that theſe men were afflicted with and that it was inſufferable and not to be overcome by any Art, and ſo deſired the Governour to releaſe them, which was accordingly performed. After they had regained their Liberty, they continued ſome few days in the town, and

would frequently make ſpeeches in the Churches, and exhort the people toimbrace their Doctrine and follow the Light which was within them. The *Italians* after their enlargement were very civil to them, and if at any time they cauſed any diſturbance in the Church, the Officers would gently force t em out, without uſing any manner of rigour or ſeverity to them. For the whole City looked upon them as 3 diſtracted men, ſo whatſoever they ſaid or did, was looked upon, as pro eeding from the Diſtemper of their brain, and civilly connived at and paſſed over without any notice.

Towards the beginning of *June* they left *Milano* and ſet forward for *Rome*. For their chief deſign was to go thither, to convert the *great Leviathan* (as they uſual called the *Pope*) and to reform *Babilon*. I heard not of any conſiderable action in their Journey from *Milan* to *Rome*; but you may imagine by their bald Sculls and moroſe carriage, what thoughts the people had of them, for now whereſoever they came the people looked upon them as men diſtracted and mad: ſome were afraid of them, others laughed at and derided them, no body at all regarded any thing they ſaid.

June the 18 they came to *Rome* the place they ſo much deſired to ſee, upon the *Sunday* following they according to their old Cuſtome entred a little Church called *San Jacomo Scozza Cavalli*, where *Watſon* made a fierce and zealous diſcourſe againſt the *Babiloniſh Idolatry* of that City, and ſaid that the *Pope* who was the *Man of Sin* and the *great Leviathan*, was now to be cruſhed in pieces, and God had ſent them from the utmoſt parts of the Earth, toconvert that City, and to confound the *Pope* and all his *Adherents*, and that now all mankind was to expect and ſeek for the *holy Anointing*, for they were all to be taught of God, and not any longer to follow Monks and Prieſts, who were all falſe Prophets, and that now God would pour out the full Vials of his wrath and fierce indignation upon them, and bring them all to utter ruine, ſham e and confuſion. I know the Reader will admire to hear that the *Romans* were ſo patient, and let them run on ſo long in theſe diſcourſes, and not cauſe them to be carried out of the Church and puniſhed for this diſturbance. But the reaſon of this connivance was not for want of zeal, but becauſe the Church and Congregation was very ſmall, ſo that the people were affrighted and all kept at a good diſtance, for by their very looks and manner of diſcourſe the people generally concluded them 3 Bedlams, and were greatly afraid of them, until at laſt one who had more courage and reſolution then the reſt, went and fetcht ſome Officers and put them into the inquiſition as *Hereticks*. But thoſe of the inquiſition ſoon rid their hands of them, and the ſame day towards Evening, ſet them at liberty, ſaying that it was their buſineſs only to take notice of *Hereticks* and not of *mad-men*. The next day which was the great ſolemnity of St. *John Baptiſt*, they cauſed the ſame diſturbance in the great *Dome*, that famous and renowned Church of St. *Peter*, but here they were quickly carried out, but no other ſeverity uſed, becauſe all the world now looked upon them as *mad-men*.

I am weary of relating theſe frantick attempts and diſcourſes which they made in ſeveral of the Churches of *Rome*, and ſo ſhall paſs by a great many of them in ſilence, and come to their attempts upon the *Pope* himſelf. They went to the *Engliſh Colledge* and deſired the Governours aſſiſtance to bring them to the preſence of the *Pope*. The Governour refuſed to meddle in that matter, alledging the dangerous conſequents of it, that it would not only bring particular ruine to themſelves, but would alſo be a ſhame and reproach to the *Engliſh Nation* it ſelf: Wherefore he earneſtly preſſed & urged them to deſiſt from that dangerous attempt, and return home. Hereupon the *Quakers* fell in a great paſſion, and told him that he ſavoured not the things of God, but was yet wholly carnal, and that he was like *Herod*, and with him went about as much as in him lay to murder the *child Jeſus*, and to hinder the peoples converſion from Idolatry, and embracing the *everlaſting Goſpel*, and ſo in great diſcontent they left him.

The conference of Cardinal Pool with the Engliſh Quakers, and how he brought them before the Pope.

Theſe poor *Quakers* had not been a month in *Rome*, but the whole City took great notice of them; and generally condoled their condition, as being diſtracted and far from their own Country, *July* 6 *Cardinal Pool* hearing much of theſe mens frantick actions, was very deſirous out of curioſity to ſee them, and to diſcourſe with them, hereupon he cauſed them to be brought before him, and was pleaſed with much patience to diſcourſe an hour with them, and then civilly diſmiſſed them, and ſent them to their Lodgings. About two days after he made report to the *Cardinal* his Coſin & to the *Pope* himſelf of what had happened, and of the ſtrange and unparalleld enthuſiaſms of theſe 3 Engliſh *Pazzi* (for ſo he always termed them) and how they had a great deſire to have ſome conference with his Holineſs, and that they affirmed that God had ſent them to deliver ſome ſecret Revelations to him. The Pope at firſt was a little ſurprized with the novelty and ſtrangeneſs of the thing, and gave order to have them privately brought before him and the 2 Cardinals. When they were admitted into the preſence, *Watſon* ſaluted the Pope with this addreſs. *Art thou that Man of Sin, that Antichriſt and great Leviathan, Verily God hath raiſed us up from the utmoſt parts of the Earth to preach the everlaſting Goſpel to thee, and to convert thee from thy Idolatry, Errors and ſinful ways, unto the true way and to the Light, &c.* The Pope was much amazed at this ſtrange confidence and prodigious boldneſs, and did really believe that the common report had not at all belyed them, but that they were very much diſtempered in their minds, and diſtracted, and gave a ſtrict command that none ſhould offer any violence to them, but withal privately appointed ſome of the *Engliſh Colledge* to perſwade them to return home, or elſe to take charge of them in their Colledge, and not let them thus

run about the City, disturbing the people. The busines was effected according to the Popes desire, for about the end of *July* seeing how unsuccesful their endeavours had been, they resolved to leave that *Babylonian City*, and go preach the Gospel to the *Turks* and *Mahomitans*. In order thereunto they took Shipping for *Constantinople*, where after two months tossing upon a dangerous and tempestuous Sea, they at length safely arrived

They had not been above a fortnight in that great City, but they went into the *Mahometans Mosco's* and *Temples*, and caused great tumult among the people. For this offence they were condemned to be bastinado'd, *i.e.* to receive three hundred blows upon the soals of their Feet, which was accordingly executed with the extremity of rigor and cruelty, so that in few dayes the putrified flesh came off from the bones, which was a miserable spectacle to behold. But this spirit of *Quakarisme* had so transported and infatuated them, that they got wooden Crutches, and once more went to their prophane *Mosco's*, and caused a much greater disturbance then before. Hereupon the Turks were exceedingly incensed, and presently had them before the *Mufti* himself, who forthwith in a great fury and rage passed this cruel sentence upon them, *viz.* That they were to have their hands chopt off, their tongues cut out their eyes bored out, and each man to have a sharp wooden stake run in at his Fundament and so quite through his body, all which was accordingly put inexecution. And so these poor wretches after all their sufferings, ended their miserable Life. This rashness of these *Quakers* had like to drew a great storm upon all the *English* Merchants, who were in great danger of having their Estates and goods seized by the *Janisaries*, but that the *English Imbassador* nobly and notably bestirred himself, and gave the *Vizier Bassa* a full and satisfactory account of the whole matter.

Conclusion.

Reader, in this short account of these mens actions, I have not studied to set it out with Eloquence and ornament, but I have fully and onely aimed at truth, resolving to give you a true and impartial Narrative of the whole business. I was well acquainted with these men in *Italy*, and had often conference with them. And of some things I was informed by others. As concerning their actions and cruel death in *Turky*, I received a full account by Letter, when I was at *Venice*, from two of my friends and faithful correspondents resident in *Constantinople*, who were eye-witnesses of their cruel and most barbarous deaths. Whose Letters I have still by me, and am willing and ready at any time to exhibit them to the view and perusal of any who shall desire a more full account of this matter.

FINIS.